



M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR
EDWIN R. RODRIGUEZ
COMMISSIONER

Department of Consumer Protection

FACT SHEET: All About Rebates

What ever happened to that rebate you sent for but never received? This is a common consumer question, and an “ounce of prevention” can usually prevent a major rebate headache.

Before you buy a product that is offering a rebate, be sure that you’re willing to comply with all the requirements for that rebate.

For example, maybe the manufacturer wants you to send in an entire package panel, but you’re not willing to sacrifice the box.

Or you may feel compelled to use up the product before you normally would, just to remove the required labels and proof-of-purchase seals.

Finally, consider whether it will cost you more to package and mail the rebate application and all of the required documents than the actual rebate is worth!

If You’re Ready to Apply for Your Rebate:

Be sure you have the correct rebate application form. Some stores display them with the product; others post them at the check-out counter, on a central bulletin board, or at the Service Desk. If you can’t find the form, ask for it! Stores that advertise products with rebates must have the correct forms available.

Note the expiration date on the rebate form. You may contact the Department of Consumer Protection if you find that a store is advertising rebates, but doesn’t have the correct rebate forms available, or the forms have expired.

Hang on to your receipt! Many manufacturers demand the original sales receipt. If so, make a photocopy to keep for your records. (If you’re buying a number of “rebate” items at one time, you might want to ask for separate sales receipts for each rebate item.)

Write down the name and address of the place to which you will mail your rebate application, along with brand name, model number, and any other pertinent information about the product. Many times, the consumer simply fills in the rebate form and mails it with no record of the address to which it was sent. Many manufacturers use “fulfillment” houses to process rebates, and these houses often set up specific post office boxes which are used only until the listed expiration date. Naturally, if you write after this date to inquire about your rebate check, you may get no response. Therefore, a full address is important, as well as the name and address of the manufacturer.

Don’t discard the packaging until you’re sure you have all the required proofs-of-purchase. These could be UPC symbols, a special logo, a box top, etc. (Be aware -- is **more than one** proof-of-purchase required? If so, is the rebate still a value once you’re paid for two or more of the same item?)

Be sure you complete the rebate form completely and clearly. Inexpensive printed address labels are ideal to stick on those rebate forms that have very small spaces. It’s a good idea to staple the receipt and proofs of purchase to the rebate form. Again, be sure to print all information clearly and correctly.

Waiting for the Check to Arrive

Rebate checks are notorious for taking a long time to arrive, so always allow the maximum time advertised by the manufacturer to receive your rebate.

If no rebate arrives once that time has passed, send a letter of complaint to the name and address where you originally sent the rebate application. You should also write to the manufacturer. If that fails, please contact the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection at the address, website, or phone number listed below.

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER PROTECTION

Trade Practices Division

165 Capitol Avenue

Hartford, CT 06106

1-800-842-2649

www.state.ct.us/dcp

One Last Note About Rebate Advertising

Connecticut has a Rebate Advertising Law that requires retailers who advertise the net (after rebate) price of an item to ***pay the consumer the amount of that rebate when he or she buys the item.***

If the retailer doesn't wish to do this, it cannot advertise the "after-rebate price" as the final price to be paid by the consumer. Thus, there should be no confusion about the amount the customer must pay at the cash register.